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A new Philosciid from eastern Africa (Crustacea, Oniscoidea)

by

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With 2 figures

Abstract

The terrestrial Isopod *Afrophiloscia aelleni* n. sp. from Kenya and Tanzania is described. Another species, *Chaetophiloscia balssi* Verhoeff, 1928, collected in greenhouses in München and Amsterdam is discussed and transferred to the genus *Afrophiloscia*.

Afrophiloscia Aelleni n. sp.

Specimens examined. — Kenya: 1 ♂ *(Holotypus)*, grotte de Shimoni A, leg. V. Aellen and P. Strinati, 28.IX.1975, Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Genève. Tanzania: 2 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀ *(Paratypi)*, Tanga, leg. Kock, 12.VIII.1979, Senckenberg — Museum, Frankfurt am Main.

Description. — Length of the Holotype: 7 mm. Light brown with yellowish muscle spots; antenna with distal half of fifth joint of peduncle pale. Back equipped with the usual upright setae. No gland pores are present; b/c and d/c co-ordinates of *noduli laterales* as in Fig. 1*a*. Shape of the body as in all the other species of *Afrophiloscia* (cfr. Taiti & Ferrara 1980, Fig. 39). Cephalon without frontal line and with supra-antennal line; eyes with about 20 ommatides. Pleon epimera reduced, adpressed, with very short posterior points invisible in dorsal view. Telson (Fig. 1*b*) with largely rounded apex. Antenna with fifth joint of peduncle as long as flagellum; ratio of flagellum joints 8:6:5. Molar penicil of mandible consisting of a single unbranched seta. Outer branch of maxillula with 4 + 6 (5 cleft) teeth. Maxilliped (Fig. 1*c*): endite without a penicil and with the typical incision on medial margin. Uropods: protopodite grooved on outer surface; insertions of exo- and endopodite at the same level.

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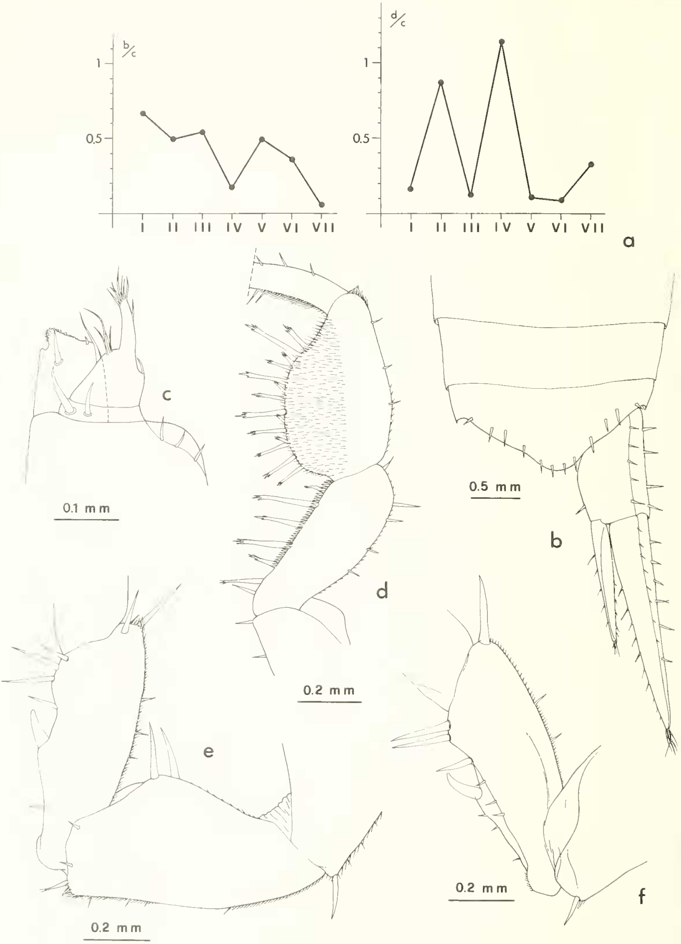

Fig. 1.

Afrophiloscia aelleni n. sp. *(Holotypus)*:
a) b/c and d/c co-ordinates of *noduli laterales*; *b)* telson and right uropod;
c) apex of maxilliped; *d)* pereopod 1 merus and carpus;
e) pereopod 7 ischium and merus, rostral; *f)* pereopod 7 merus, caudal.

Male characters. — Pereopod 1-2 carpus (Fig. 1*d*) flattened, with a row of strong spines on the sternal margin and covered with short setae on the rostral surface. Pereopod 7 merus (Fig. 1*e*, *f*) equipped with a strong spine obliquely directed: this structure is similar to that of *A. africana* (Schmoelzer, 1974) but the spine is inserted more distally. Pleopod 1 exopodite (Fig. 2*a*) with sharp posterior point strongly bent outwards; endopodite (Fig. 2*b*) narrowed at the apex. Pleopod 2 as in Fig. 2*c*.

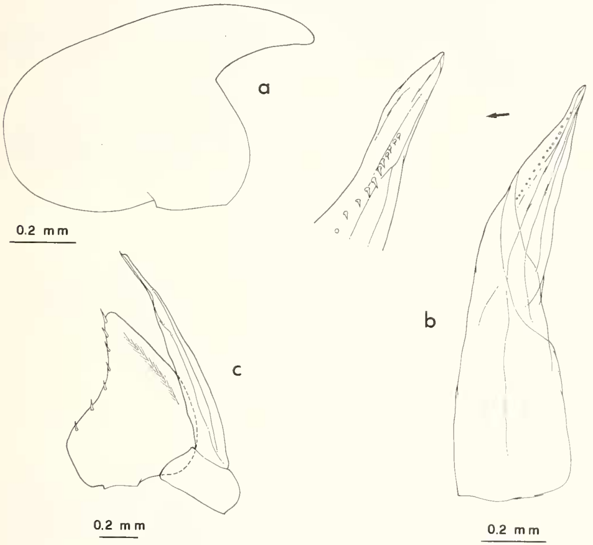

FIG. 2.

Afrophiloscia aelleni n. sp. *(Holotypus)*:
a) pleopod 1 exopodite; *b)* pleopod 1 endopodite; *c)* pleopod 2.

Etymology. — The new species is named for Prof. V. Aellen, Director of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle de Genève, who collected the first specimen of this interesting philosciid.

Remarks. — *A. aelleni* is very close to *A. africana*, from which it is distinguished by the different position of the meral spine on pereopod 7 ♂, the sharper posterior point of pleopod 1 exopodite ♂ and the different shape of pleopod 1 endopodite ♂.

Because of the modification of the pereopod 1-2 ♂, the new species shows affinities also with *A. kinolensis* Taiti & Ferrara, 1980 and *Chaetophiloscia balssi* Verhoeff, 1928, a species collected in the greenhouses of München (VERHOEFF 1928) and Amsterdam

(HOLTHUIS 1945) which also belongs to the genus *Afrophiloscia* Taiti & Ferrara, 1980. In fact the reexamination of the syntypes (2 ♂♂, 8 ♀♀) deposited in the Zoologische Staatssammlung, München shows that:

a) the *sulcus marginalis* and gland pores are absent;

b) the position of *noduli laterales* is as represented in Fig. 1*a* and completely different from that of *Chaetophiloscia* (cfr. FERRARA & TAITI 1981, Fig. 5);

c) the molar penicil of mandible is simple and not dichotomized as in *Chaetophiloscia*;

d) the endite of maxilliped is similar to that represented in Fig. 1*c* [1];

e) the insertion of uropod endopodite is at the same level to that of the exopodite while in *Chaetophiloscia* it is proximal. Thus the new status of the species is *Afrophiloscia balssi* (Verhoeff, 1928).

The genus *Afrophiloscia* includes eight species (with the species described in this paper) distributed in Kenya and Tanzania. *A. balssi* has also a tropical, probably east african, origin and not mediterranean as supposed by VERHOEFF (1928) and HOLTHUIS (1945).

RIASSUNTO

Gli Autori descrivono una nuova specie di *Afrophiloscia* (Crustacea, Oniscoidea, Philosciidae) proveniente dal Kenya e dalla Tanzania, *A. aelleni*, ed assegnano a questo genere — dopo il riesame del materiale tipico — anche *Chaetophiloscia balssi* Verhoeff, 1928, specie raccolta nelle serre di München e di Amsterdam.

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[1] In GRUNER (1966, fig. 179 *B*) a tooth on the medial angle of maxilliped endite is represented, actually not present.